

CPAT Report No 1008

Lower Lea Farm, Lydham, Shropshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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August 2009

Report for McCartneys, on behalf of Mr R Hughes

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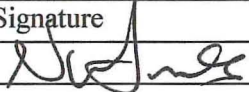

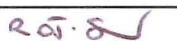
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CPAT Report Record

Report and status

CPAT Report Title	Lower Lea Farm, Lydham, Shropshire: Archaeological Assessment		
CPAT Project Name	Lower Lea Farm		
CPAT Project No	1629	CPAT Report No	1008
Confidential (yes/no)	Yes	draft/final	Final

Internal control

	name	Signature	date
prepared by	N.W.Jones		26/08/2009
checked by	R.J. Silvester		26/08/2009
approved by	R.J. Silvester		26/08/2009

Revisions

no	date	made by	checked by	approved by

Internal memo

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust was invited in July 2009 by Mr D Hughes of McCartneys to conduct an assessment of a range of buildings at Lower Lea Farm, near Lydham in Shropshire, in support of a planning application to convert some of the buildings to residential use and others into workshops.
- 1.2 The complex at Lower Lea Farm includes the remains of Lea Castle, a scheduled ancient monument and grade II listed building, which is also on the 2007 Buildings at Risk Register compiled by English Heritage. Adjoining the castle remains are a house and a cartshed and granary range, both of which are also listed grade II, with the remaining buildings comprising a timber-framed barn and a two timber and stone cowsheds.
- 1.3 Following consultation with English Heritage it has been established that a programme of investigation and limited recording would be of assistance in determining the future of the complex of buildings, the aim of which is to elucidate the more recent development of the complex, assess the significance of the buildings within it and provide an informed basis for the future management of the complex.

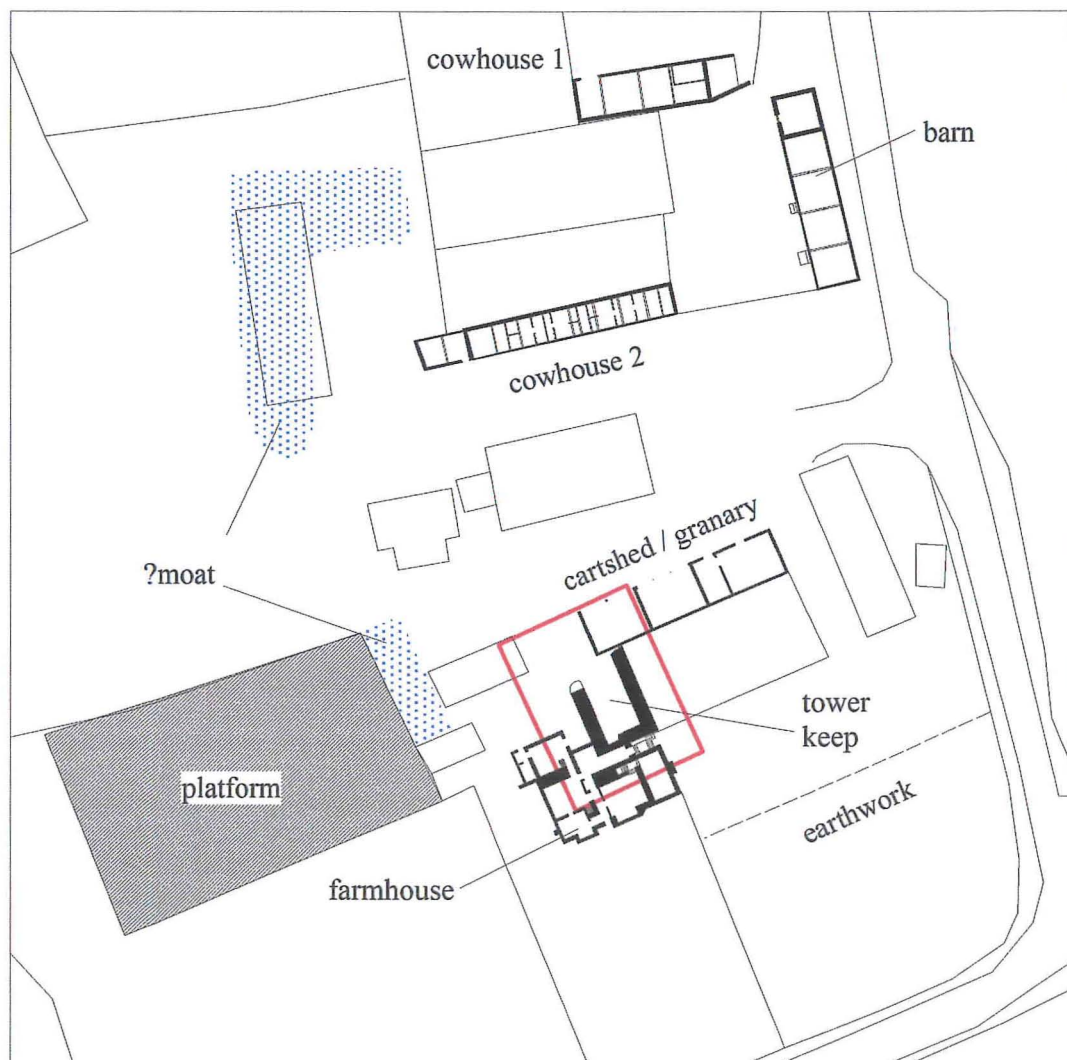
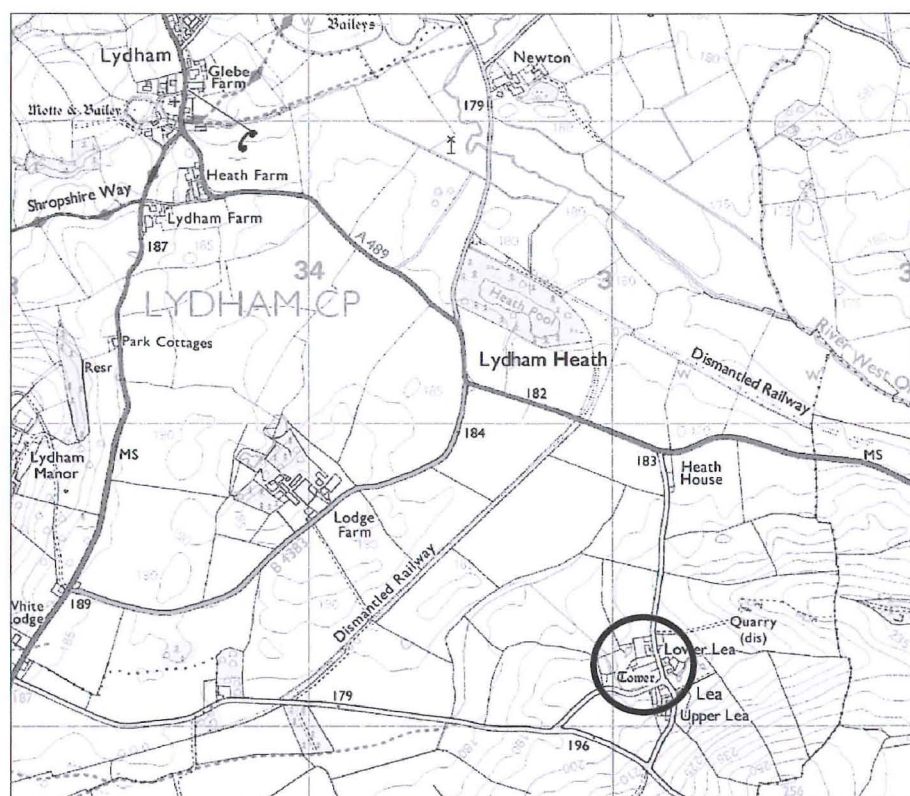


Fig. 1 Lower Lea Farm, showing those buildings which form part of the study, together with associated features and the extent of the scheduled area (in red).

2 LOCATION

- 2.1 The hamlet of Lea is located 2.5km south-east of Lydham and 2.8km east of Bishops Castle in western Shropshire. The hamlet is principally composed of Upper and Lower Lea Farms, together with a few houses, all clustered around the junction of minor roads (SO 35178916). Lower Lea is the more northerly of the two farms, and incorporates the remains of Lea Castle, which presumably represented the original focus for the settlement. The farm house adjoins the southern side of the castle ruins, while the farm complex appears to have developed in a piecemeal fashion further to the north.



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Fig. 2 Location of Lower Lea Farm, Lydham

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A desk-based study was undertaken to research the history and development of Lower Lea Farm, and the settlement of Lea in general. This involved the examination of all readily available primary and secondary documentary, cartographic, pictorial, aerial photographic and oral sources at Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury. The Historic Environment Record was consulted using the on-line resource provided by Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk).
- 3.2 Information from these sources has been integrated into the text that follows, together with a list of the works consulted, but without specifying the precise source of any particular statement; should this information be required, it can be provided on request. The original maps that have been consulted are also listed at the end of the report. None of the manuscript maps can be reproduced in the text because of copyright restrictions, though copies could probably be acquired at a cost from the archive where they are housed.

- 3.3 The date at which Lea came into existence cannot be established. The name itself is an Old English term usually meaning a clearing in a wood, but also in pasture, and by extension the settlement which developed in that clearing. But while the name may pre-date the Norman Conquest, there is no physical or documentary evidence for such an early establishment. The earliest recorded reference is from the middle of the 13th century, though Victorian historians thought that Reginald de Lega, Constable of Bishop's Castle around 1220, might have been the bishop's feoffee here. A local inquest in December 1254 was attended by Kadugan de Lee, and in an Inquest of 1255 the holding of Lee was judged to be two-thirds of a hide in extent.
- 3.4 Lea Castle is unlikely to have been of any great military or political significance, though it did lie beside one of the main routes eastwards from Bishop's Castle and in this respect could have had some strategic value. It is rarely mentioned in medieval documents, and from the 14th century effectively seems to have been a well-defended domestic residence. Robert Corbet was recorded as living here in the 1320s after the manor of Lydbury North which included Bishop's Castle was confiscated from the Bishop of Hereford by Edward II, and when Bishop's Castle was returned to the bishop by Edward III, Lea remained a (and perhaps the main) Corbet residence.
- 3.5 The nature of the castle is far from clear. That the surviving tower formed the focus is reasonably clear, but if there were ancillary structures they have not survived. Historians in the 19th century referred to a moat and the Tithe map of 1844, together with the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map of 1883, depict an L-shaped pond which could well be the residual traces of the medieval feature (see Figs 1 and 3, and section 4.3). Moated earthworks would have been well in keeping with the standards of status and display expected of medieval gentry, but whether the tower lay within the moat or outside it is an unresolved issue.



Fig. 3 Tithe Survey of 1844

- 3.6 During the civil war Lea Castle was held for the Royalists by the Corbets and Sir Michael Woodhouse, the Governor of Ludlow, wrote letters to Prince Rupert about the garrison at Lay House, as it was then referred to. The castle was taken by Parliament, under the leadership of Sir

Thomas Myddelton, in October 1645, after which the Royalist garrison was ordered to be removed and the castle destroyed.

- 3.7 References right through to the 19th century continue to refer to the settlement as Lea without any precise indication of what it consisted of. At some point other farms were developed around the castle. By the late 18th century and probably at a much earlier date the farm now known as Lower Lea had been joined by that now known as Upper Lea and by another centred on what is now The Cottage. Initially in different ownerships, as shown on a map of 1779, they were acquired by William Oakeley (of nearby Oakeley Hall?) whose family controlled the whole area around Lea by the middle of the 19th century.
- 3.8 Lea was 'by-passed' in the early 19th century. A new turnpike road was constructed about 1820 eastwards from Bishop's Castle running down past Totterton, and the old road that went through the settlement became no more than a lane giving access to Lea itself. It can also be noted that Lea has been a part of Lydham only since 1934 when it was transferred from the parish of Bishop's Castle.
- 3.9 The Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map of 1883 shows the layout of the hamlet of Lea and curiously includes a transcription error with regard to the farmhouse which has not been shaded as a building. Although the outline is clearly that of the house, within it is a field number (41) has been placed there erroneously .

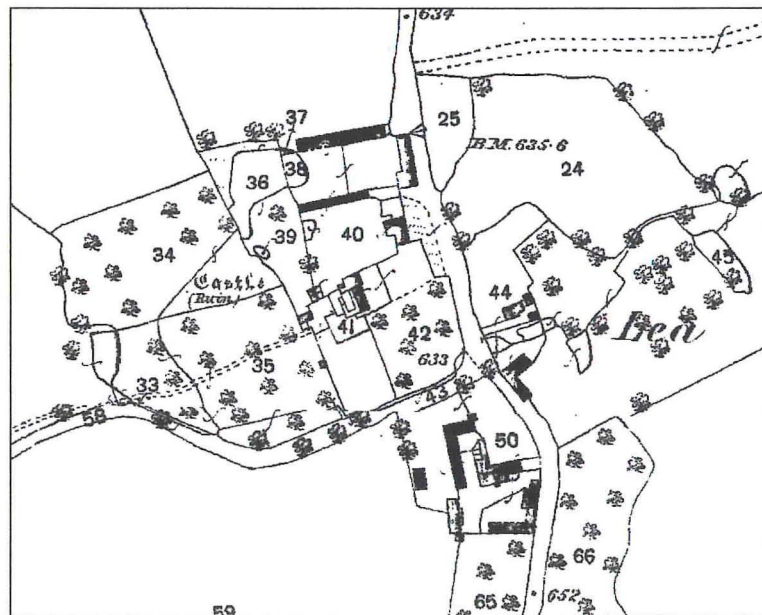


Fig. 4 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map of 1883

4 RAPID BUILDING SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 A field examination of the farm complex was undertaken in accordance with the basic requirements of a Level 2 Survey as defined by English Heritage in 2006 in 'Understanding Historic Buildings – a Guide to Good Recording Practice'. This comprised a basic measured survey of the ground floors of each of the main buildings, together with a descriptive written record and general internal and external photography. The following text draws on the official listing descriptions by English Heritage, with the addition of further detail from the building survey.

Lea Castle (PRN 13651)

- 4.2 The castle is protected as both a Scheduled Monument (no. 34934) and a grade II Listed Building (no. 257070), as well as appearing on the Buildings at Risk Register compiled by English Heritage. The remains are thought to be those of a tower keep, rather than a castle, and may have been built in the late 13th or early 14th century. The earliest known occupant, Robert Corbet, is mentioned in a document of about 1328-29. The Corbets were still in possession of the castle in 1645 when Parliament ordered a Royalist garrison to be removed and the castle destroyed.
- 4.3 There is evidence to suggest that the castle was associated with a moat, part of which may be depicted on the Tithe Survey of 1844, although the overall extent is uncertain. However, there is also a shallow linear depression around 5m in width further to the south, which may be a continuation of the feature, and there is also a marked linear scarp running east to west to the south of the farmhouse. Other earthworks include a levelled and partly raised rectangular platform measuring around 45m by 30m on the western side of the farm, which could belong to a garden associated with the castle and later house (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 5 The remains of the Tower Keep viewed from the west.

- 4.3 The tower keep occupies a slightly elevated position in an area of undulating land and is overlooked by higher ground to the south-east. The plan is rectangular, with three of the walls surviving and standing to a maximum height of 9m, the extant remains measuring

approximately 9.5m east to west by 13m north to south, with walls about 2m thick (see Fig. 12). The northern end of the east wall has been incorporated into a mid 19th-century cartshed which is itself in a somewhat precarious state with significant recent collapse. Although it has been suggested that the tithe map of 1844 (Fig. 3) shows the outline of the tower keep prior to the demolition of the northern part of the building, the present study, through rectification of the map, has demonstrated that the tower is not actually depicted. The map does, however, depict what must be the farmhouse to the south, along with a number of boundaries, some of which respect the position of the tower keep.

- 4.4 The tower keep was originally a three-storeyed structure with a basement, a first floor hall, and private chambers above. It is constructed of coursed limestone rubble with dressed sandstone around the door and window openings. In the southern wall of the basement there is a splayed opening incorporating a modern wooden lintel, which is likely to be the upper part of a fireplace (Fig. 6). Along the western wall the division between the basement and the first floor is marked by a scarcement (a ledge created by the additional thickness of the lower part of the wall to support floor joists).

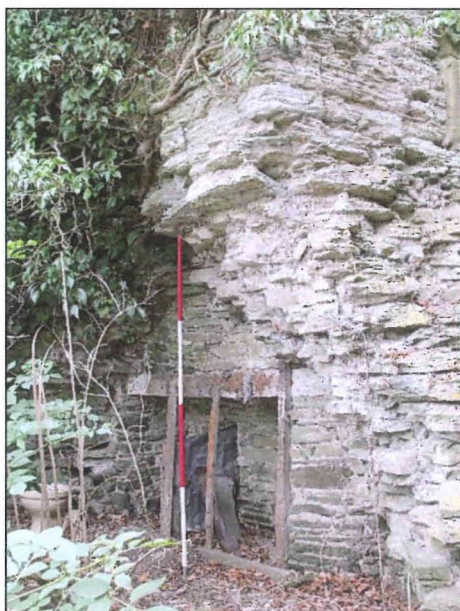


Fig. 6 Probable basement fireplace



Fig. 7 First-floor doorway viewed from within the attic

- 4.5 At first floor level in the south-western corner of the building are the remains of two blocked doorways. Access to the first floor from outside was through the doorway in the southern wall, visible in the attic of a first-floor bathroom in the adjoining farmhouse as a pointed (four-centred) arch with a portcullis groove and drawbar holes (Fig. 7). The arch is now supported by modern lintels and there are signs of recent collapse. Next to this doorway in the southern wall is a splayed window opening (Fig. 8), adjacent to what may be a projecting chimney founded on a dressed sandstone plinth and supported by four dressed sandstone corbels (Fig. 9). Access from the first and second floors would have been by means of an internal circular stairway, the remains of which were noted in 1858 prior to the demolition of the northern part of the building. In 1844 excavations, undertaken in the course of building work close to the tower keep, found the remains of an arch about five feet (1.5m) wide and five feet high. The foundations of the northern part of the building, together with the contemporary remains of internal floor and external yard surfaces, are likely to survive as buried features.

- 4.6 The interior of the tower keep is now buried with a substantial quantity of rubble and the walls are largely obscured by vegetation. It is very likely that beneath the rubble the floor of the basement and architectural features on the lower walling still survive.

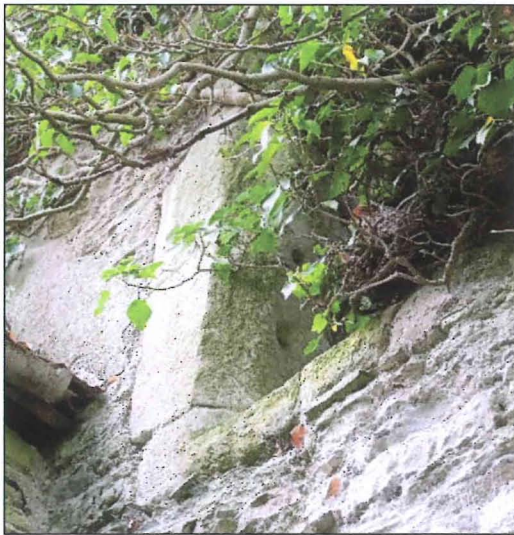


Fig. 8 First-floor window

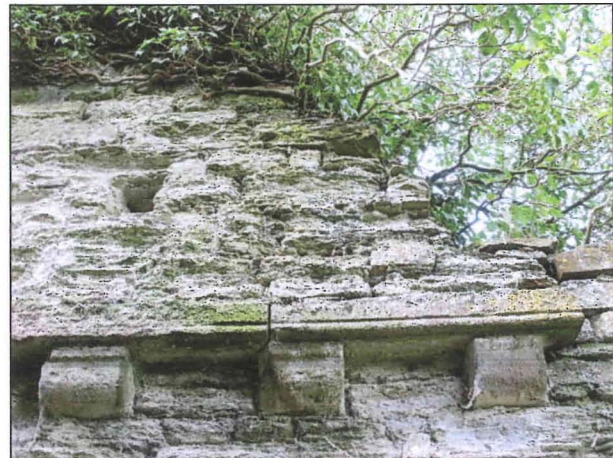


Fig. 9 First-floor corbels and plinth for probable fireplace and chimney

Lower Lea Farmhouse (PRN 17824)

- 4.7 The farmhouse is protected as a grade II listed building (no. 257069) and has remained unoccupied for a number of years, leading to some water ingress where roofing tiles have been lost and windows broken.



Fig. 10 Lower Lea Farmhouse, south elevation

- 4.8 The visible structure is largely 19th-century, with several phases evident (see Figs 12-13), although a predecessor is suggested by the Tithe Survey of 1844, which depicts a rectangular building against the southern end of the tower keep with a projection on the south side (Phase 1). A date plaque of AD 1560 has been set into the outside of the modern porch and it is tempting to suggest that it was derived from this building. Externally, there is now no trace of

this earlier structure, although it is quite possible that elements may have been incorporated into later phases.

- 4.9 The earliest visible structure (Phase 2a) is the western range which dates from the mid 19th century, and is built of coursed limestone rubble with red-brick dressings and a tiled roof (Fig. 11). This has a dormered upper storey and a massive stack incorporated into the northern gable. The position of the wing is curious and may suggest that it was built to replace part of the earlier building while the remainder was still standing, although this is entirely speculative. A single-storey, slated extension was later added to the northern end to form the farmhouse kitchen (Phase 2b), from which there is a stair ladder leading to what has been described as the 'mens' room' (Moran 2003).



Fig. 11 The western range of the farmhouse (Phase 2)

- 4.10 A substantial two-storeyed extension was added on the east side (Phase 3a), which is also of coursed limestone rubble with red-brick dressings. The roof is of plain tile, with a partial catslide over an outshut at the rear, between the earlier phase and the west side of the tower keep. This phase incorporates a large stack on the northern side, which has an obvious butt joint in the masonry, visible in the roof space above the outshut. Possibly not long after its construction, and certainly before 1883, a further two-storeyed extension with an external end stack was added to the east (Phase 3b). The floor levels in this part of the building are raised several steps above the main house, due to the presence of a basement.
- 4.11 The final phase (Phase 4) probably dates from the second half of the 20th century and comprises a gabled red-brick extension to the front, south side, and the addition of a utility room and bathroom on the western side of the kitchen.
- 4.12 There are several ancillary buildings to the west of the farmhouse, including a laundry, an outside toilet and a set of goose pens, the last being a rather unusual feature and potentially a rare survival.

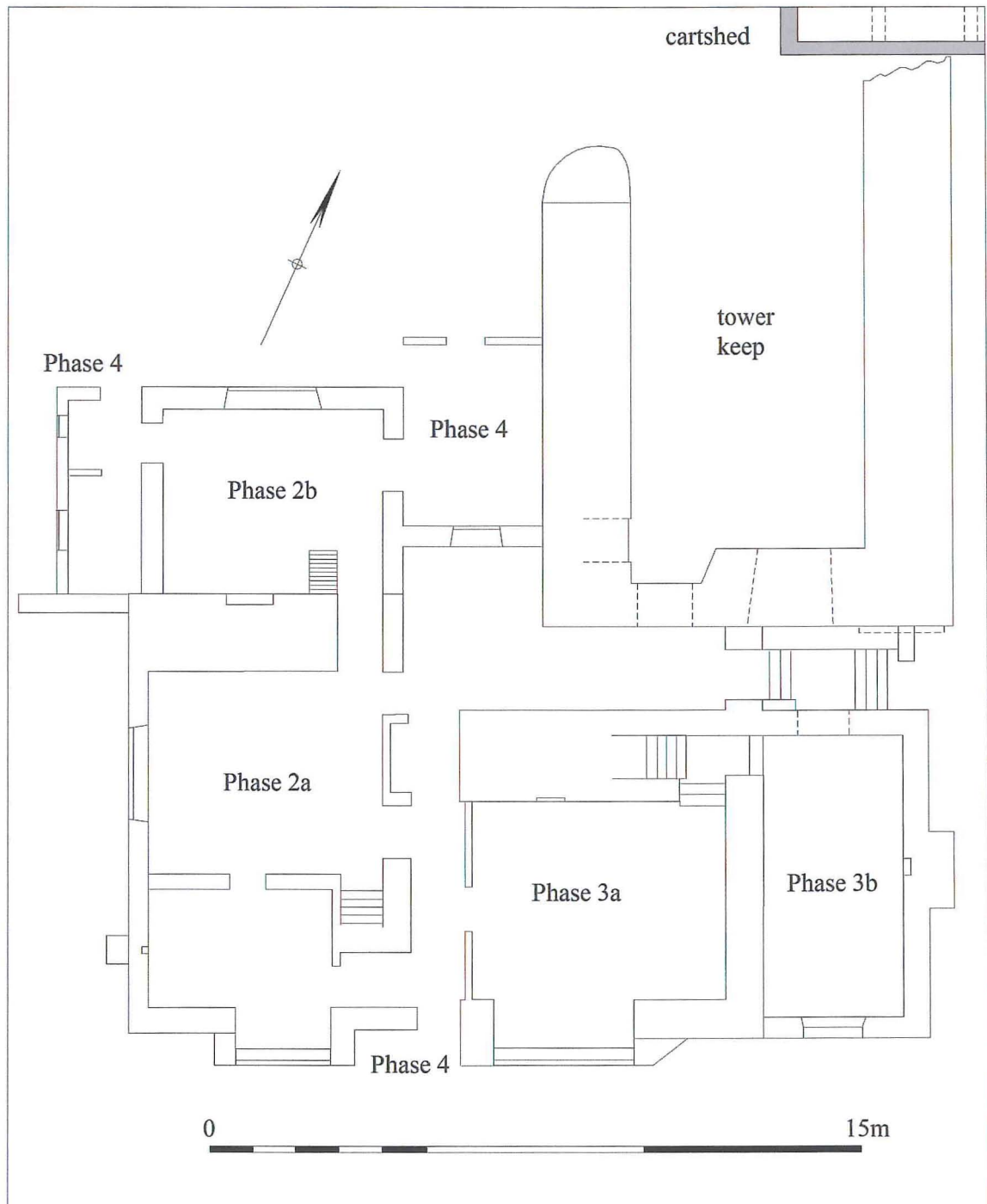


Fig. 12 Ground floor plan of Lower Lea Farmhouse and Tower Keep

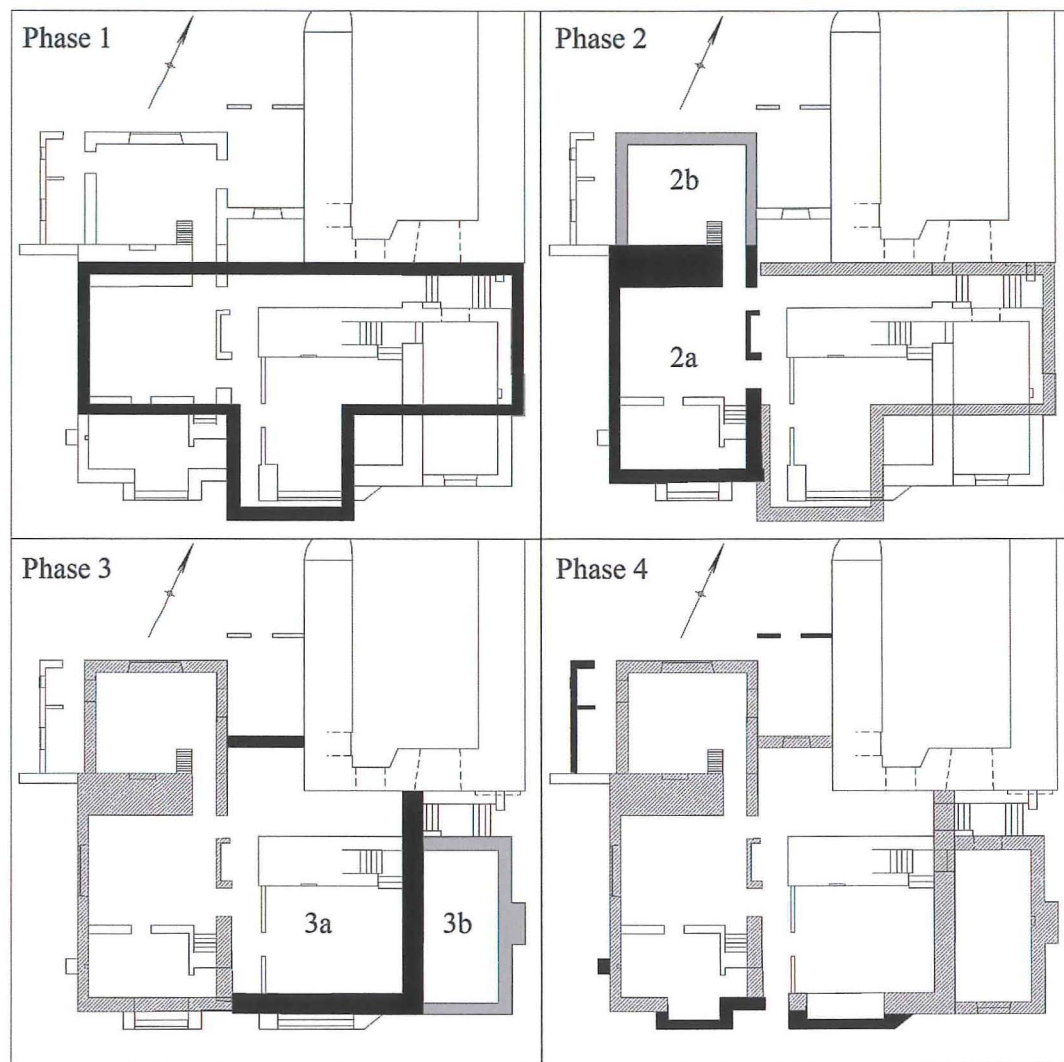


Fig. 13 Conjectural phasing of Lower Lea Farmhouse

Lower Lea Barn (PRN 13652)

- 4.13 A timber-framed barn to the north-east of the farmhouse, adjacent and parallel to the road, is protected as a grade II listed building (no. 257072). The style of the framing suggests that this may date from the late 17th or early 18th centuries.



Fig. 14 The barn viewed from the west

- 4.14 The barn rests on a plinth of uncoursed limestone rubble, which stands to a maximum of 1.6m on the north-western corner. The plinth has a curious joint beneath the northern side of the central bay which suggests that its southern part may belong to an earlier structure. The framing is composed of square panels, originally infilled with woven wattles, most of which have been replaced with weatherboarding. The frame includes angle braces and transverse tension braces, despite which significant displacement has occurred, notably at the southern end.



Fig. 15 Eastern interior of Bay 2 showing detail of framing and surviving woven infill

- 4.15 Overall the barn measures 28m by 6m externally, and is divided into five bays rising to around 7.5m at the apex, above floor level. Originally there were opposing double doors in the central bay, although the western door has since been blocked with a new door inserted to the south. The southern two bays have flooring of earth and stone, while Bays 3 and 4 have boarded floors. Bay 5 has an understorey and would also have had a boarded floor, although this has been removed.
- 4.16 The double-purlin roof is supported on trusses comprising principal rafters with a tie beam and inclined struts, and is clad in corrugated iron. The end trusses each have loft doors between the collar and tie beam.

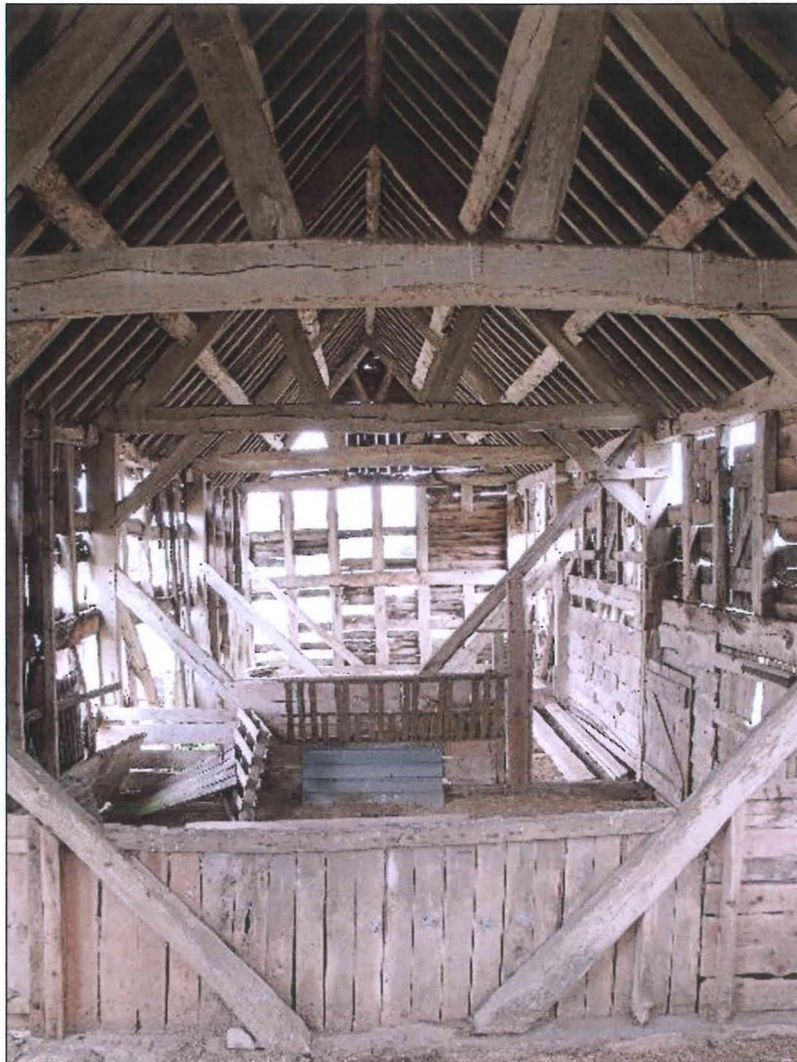


Fig. 16 Interior of the barn showing Bays 3-5

- 4.17 The trusses are in good condition, as is most of the framing, with the exception of the western side where the weatherboard is missing and significant rotting has occurred. The plinth has bowed considerably on the western side, with movement of up to 150mm.

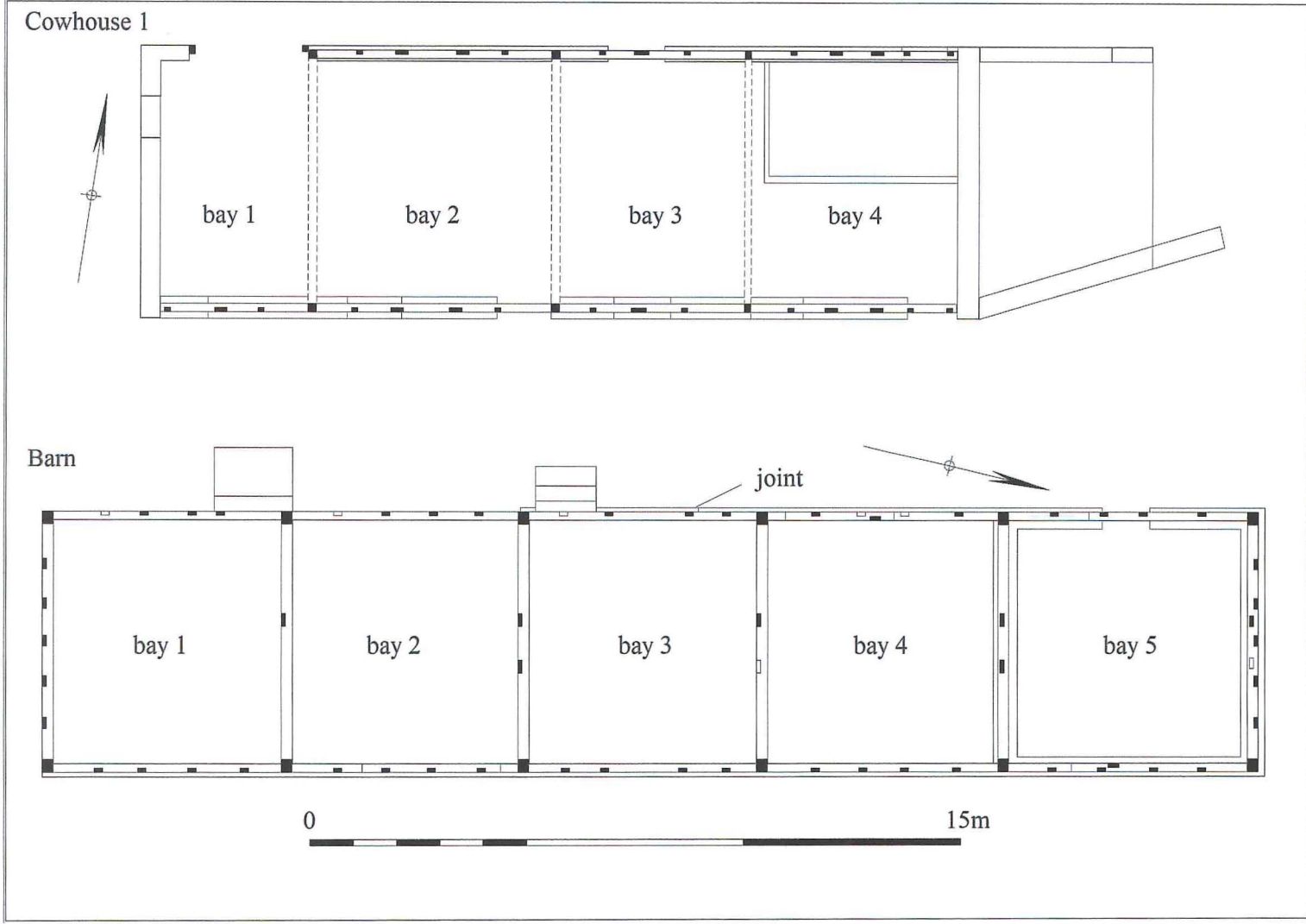


Fig. 17 Ground floor plans of the Barn and Cowshed 1

Lower Lea Cowhouse 1 (PRN 13652)

- 4.18 A mid 19th-century cowhouse at the northern end of the farm complex is protected as a grade II listed building (no. 257073). The gable ends and plinth are of rubble construction, while the upper part is timber-framed and clad in weatherboard. The building measures 9.3m by 6.3m, rising to around 8m in height at the apex.
- 4.19 The building was constructed as a purpose-built cowhouse, originally having six doorways in the southern wall, giving access to stalls and feeding passages, of which four have since been blocked. There are four unequal bays, all of which originally had a first-floor hay loft, although this is only retained in the eastern bay. The north-eastern corner has a modern ground-floor partition which contains some machine bases.

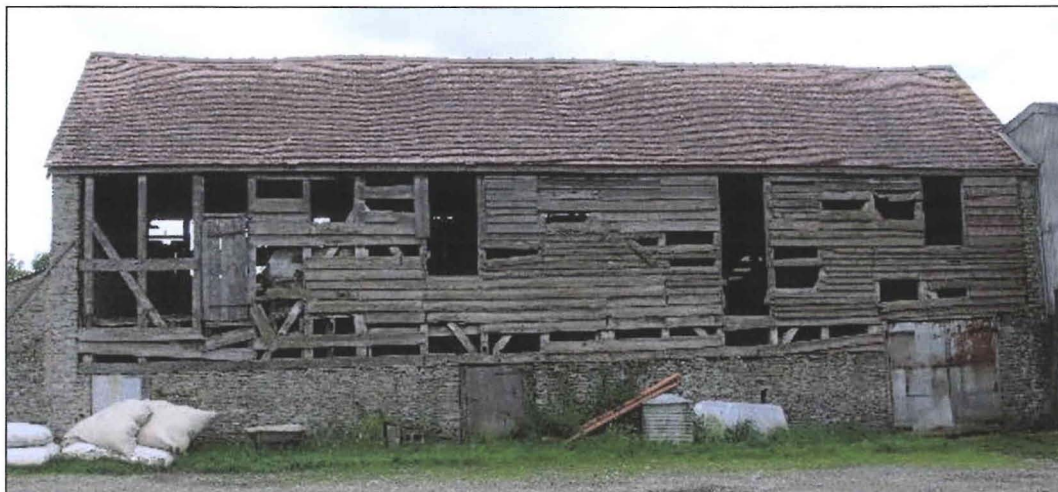


Fig. 18 Cowhouse 1 viewed from the north

- 4.20 The roof has staggered double purlins supported on machine-cut king post trusses with slanted struts and jowled posts, and is clad in plain tiles. The roof is in generally good condition, although there are some missing tiles in the south-western corner. The overall structure appears sound, although there are several visible cracks in the western gable wall.



Fig. 19 Interior of Cowhouse 1

Lower Lea Cartshed and Granary Range (PRN 17825)

- 4.21 The cartshed and granary range immediately to the north of the tower keep is protected as a grade II listed building (no. 257071). The earliest part of the range is a cartshed at the western end which was built sometime between 1844 and 1883. This is of rubble stone construction, measuring 9m by 6.75m, open on the ground floor on the northern side, with a timber frame and weatherboarding above. This structure was built directly onto the northern end of the east wall of the tower keep (Fig. 24).



Fig. 20 Mid 19th-century cartshed

- 4.22 The first floor is supported on three large, transverse joists, with a single lintel across the cartshed entrance. This rests on a central post which appears to be a re-used principal floor joist with four joist sockets on either side, a broad chamfer on the inner side and stop chamfers on the outer side. An enclosed internal staircase leads to the first floor, which has loading doors in the north and west walls. There has been some significant recent collapse to the western gable and the whole is now in a precarious state.

- 4.23 The range was extended at the eastern end, probably in the late 19th century, by the addition of a red-brick cartshed and granary. The cartshed has two cast-iron columns resting on stone plinths supporting a substantial lintel with three relieving arches above.

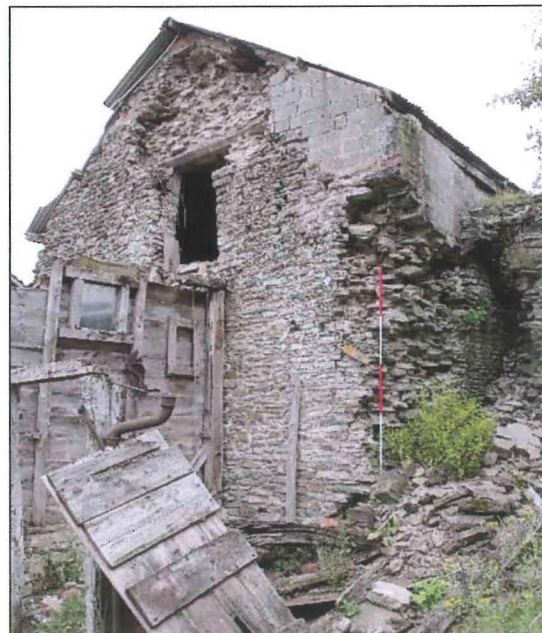


Fig. 21 Recent collapse to the western gable of the cartshed

- 4.24 The granary is divided unequally into two rooms on the ground floor. The first floor of the range is divided into two, now containing modern feed bins.
- 4.25 The listing description, which describes the 'cartshed and granary adjoining remains of Lea Castle to north', only provides a description of the earlier cartshed, with no reference to the later extension to the range. It is therefore unclear as to whether the extension is also listed, although one must presume that this is so.



Fig. 22 The later cartshed viewed from the north



Fig. 23 The granary viewed from the north

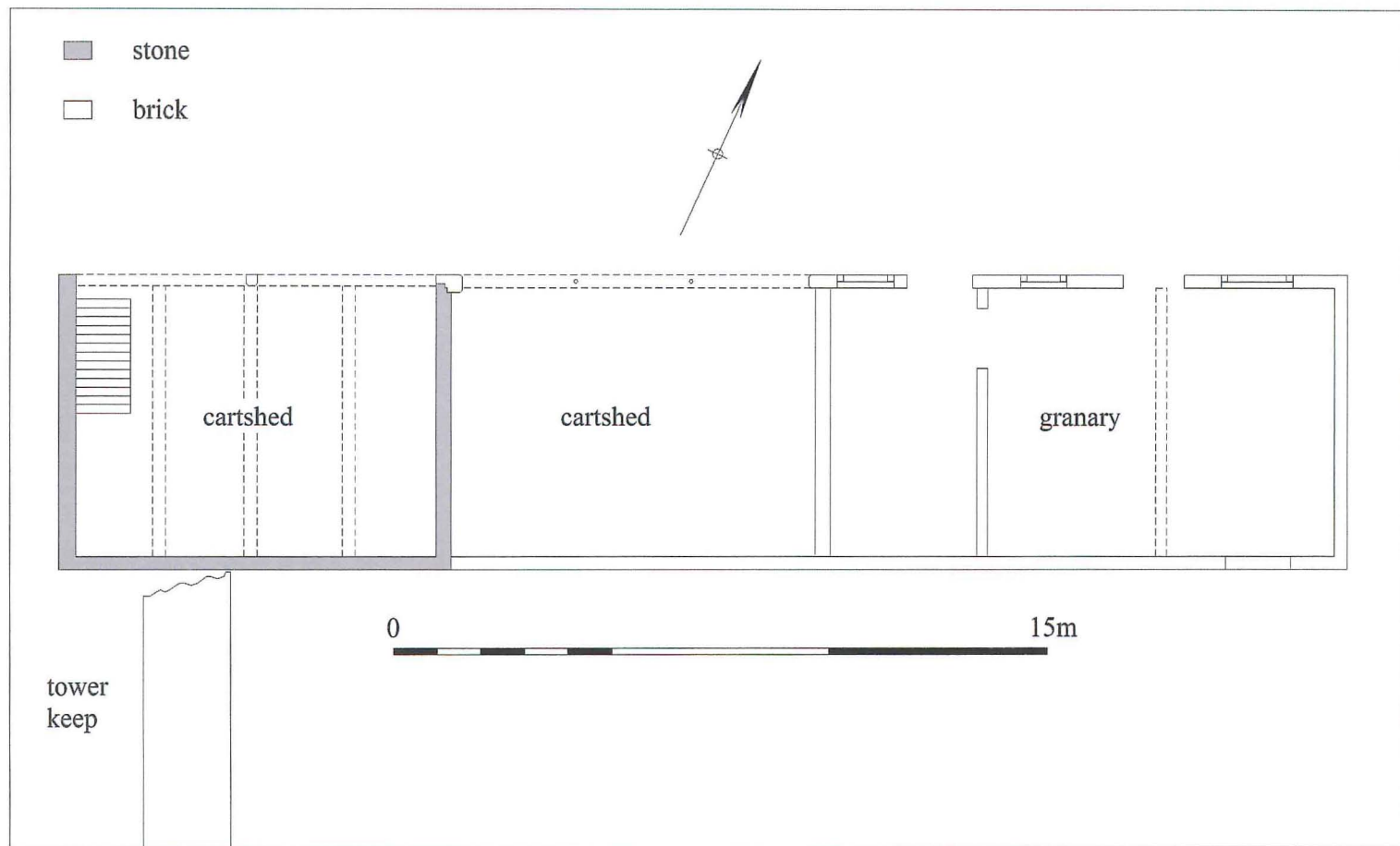


Fig. 24 Cartshed and Granary Range

Lower Lea Cowshed 2

- 4.26 The single-storey cowshed which occupies a central position in the farm complex appears to have been built between 1844 and 1883 and is currently not listed. The purpose-built cowshed, which measures 30.5m by 4.65m, has random rubble walling on the northern side and gable ends, with weatherboarded timber framing along the southern side. The simple king-post roof trusses have principal rafters which are often formed from reused timbers, supporting single purlins. The roof is now of corrugated iron and the western end of the building has been partly enclosed beneath a modern, steel-framed barn which has only been partially erected.



Fig. 25 The single-storey cowshed viewed from the south-east

- 4.27 The internal layout remains largely intact and preserves original features such as feeder troughs, stalls and hay racks. Eight doorways on the southern side provide access to the feeding passages and stalls. The original floor was of stone, or possibly cobbles.
- 4.28 There is a small extension on the western end with rubble walling on the south and west, and a weatherboarded timber frame on the north side. There is a single king-post truss and the interior has a feeding trough and hay rack on the southern wall.



Fig. 26 Interior view of the single-storey cowshed

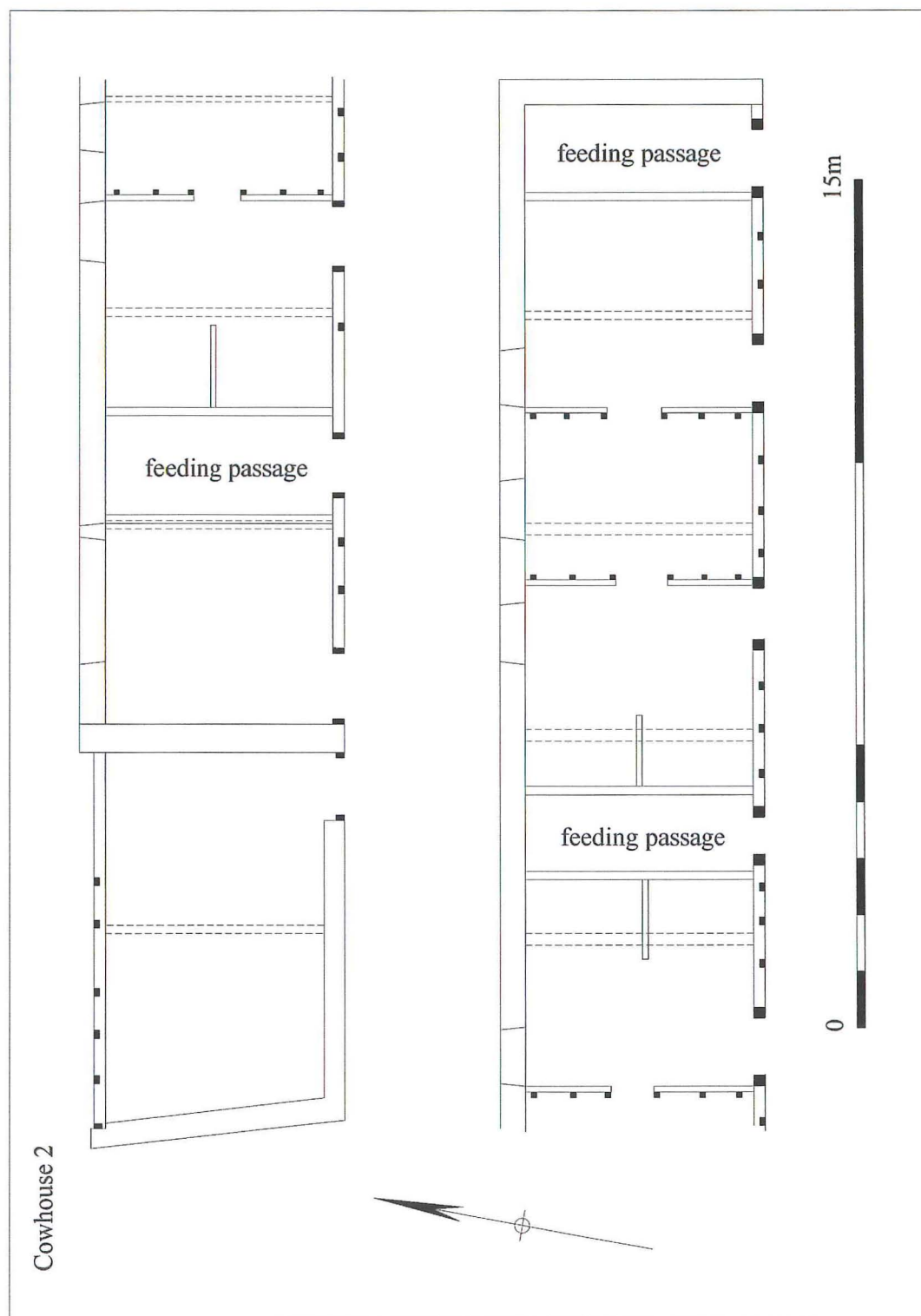


Fig. 27 Plan of the single-storeyed cowhouse

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The complex of buildings at Lower Lea Farm comprises the remains of Lea Castle, a 19th-century farmhouse, and a range of farm buildings which include a timber-framed barn, two cowhouses and a cartshed and granary range. The present study has provided a more detailed description of the buildings and their history, as well as assessing their condition and recommending a variety of options for the future management of the complex.

5.2 Lea Castle is likely to date from the late 13th or early 14th century, having been constructed as a tower keep, or fortified dwelling, rather than a true castle. The earliest known occupant of the castle, though not of Lea as a settlement, was Robert Corbet, who is referred to in a document of about 1328-29, and the Corbets were still in possession of the castle in 1645 when Parliament ordered its destruction. The north wall has been lost and the surviving remains consist of the outer walls of the basement and first floor, a second floor having also been lost. It is interesting to note that the adjacent buildings do not contain any obvious architectural fragments from the tower keep, suggesting that a significant amount of material was removed from the site after 1645.

5.3 It is difficult to get an impression of how the castle might have looked, although one can gain some insight by a comparison with the similar and better preserved structure at Hopton Castle, 11km to the south (Fig. 28). It seems likely that the tower keep was associated with a moat, although the extent of this is uncertain. Evidence from 19th-century mapping, together with surviving earthworks, hint at a roughly rectangular area which could have been around 80m by 60m internally. The modern course of the lanes around south and east side of the complex may indicate the extent of the moat, although this is conjectural.



Fig. 28 Hopton Castle

5.4 It is possible that the tower keep was replaced as a main residence by the construction of a new house immediately to the south, possibly in 1560. Certainly a house is depicted in this position in 1844, although no visible remains of this building survive. There appears to have been a major period of rebuilding during the mid 19th century, in several phases, which commenced with the construction of the existing western range of the farmhouse, the position of which suggests that part of the earlier structure may have remained in use for a short time. This was followed by a new east-west range, occupying approximately the same extent as the earlier house.

5.5 The range of farm buildings present an interesting collection of agrarian architecture, the earliest of which is a timber-framed barn on the eastern side of the complex which may date from the late 17th or early 18th century. The box-framing stands on a stone plinth, part of which may have been associated with an earlier structure. Close by is a purpose-built cowshed which is likely to be mid 19th-century in date and is constructed in stone and timber framing. The importance of dairying at this time is indicated by the presence of a second cowshed, also purpose-built, and of similar date.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Like many complexes of farm buildings which have their origins in the 18th and 19th centuries the buildings at Lower Lea were constructed to serve particular needs which may now render them redundant as a result of the increasing mechanisation of agriculture. If buildings such as these are to be preserved it is essential that alternative uses are found.
- 6.2 The condition of the buildings varies considerably, with some requiring only minor repair, while others are in need of more serious remedial works. With the exception of the single-storeyed cowhouse, all of the remaining buildings are subject to statutory protection as grade II listed buildings, while the remains of the tower keep are also protected as a scheduled ancient monument. Any proposals for works to these buildings will be subject to approval from the appropriate body, either English Heritage in the case of scheduled monument consent, or the regional Conservation Officer and Local Authority for listed building consent.

Lea Castle

- 6.3 The fate of the castle is inextricably linked to that of the farmhouse and cartshed which adjoin to the south and north respectively, and it is to be hoped that these buildings can remain within the same ownership. The remains of the tower keep are on the English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register and are in a poor state of repair with remedial works required urgently. The main problem affecting much of the masonry is vegetation, principally ivy, which has covered most of the walling. This needs to be carefully removed, and regrowth prevented, as the first stage in a programme of consolidation. Of particular concern is the stability of the adjoining cartshed, the west wall of which has partly collapsed leaving the remainder in a precarious condition. In addition, the first-floor doorway in the south wall of the tower keep also appears to be in a fragile state and requires urgent attention.
- 6.4 It is likely that significant buried remains survive both within and around the tower keep and any ground disturbance within the scheduled area would be subject to the receipt of scheduled monument consent. There is a significant quantity of rubble within the tower keep, which to some extent may be helping to support the walls. This is likely to be masking significant architectural and archaeological features and its careful removal could be seen as a long-term objective.
- 6.5 The setting of the monument is at present affected by a steel-framed cover barn which abuts the eastern side. The removal of this barn would not only improve the setting of the tower keep, but also the cartshed and granary range.
- 6.6 The extent of the castle complex is uncertain at present, with the position and form of the moat being the subject of conjecture rather than fact. It may be possible to provide further evidence through a programme of geophysical survey and trial excavation, although clearly this is more a matter of academic research.

Lower Lea Farmhouse

- 6.7 Structurally, the farmhouse appears to be in relatively good condition, with only slight damage from water ingress. However, the house has been unoccupied for a considerable period and would require significant repair to enable reoccupation. The present study has provided a suggested phasing, based on the visible structure. Further details would undoubtedly come to light during repair works and a full building survey should be considered in conjunction with a watching brief while any works are carried out. Consideration should also be given to the preservation of the adjacent goose pens, which are an unusual and relatively rare feature.

Lower Lea Barn

- 6.8 The barn is now redundant and in a poor state of repair, although the main structure itself is in good condition. As noted above, the long term future of the building is dependant on an alternative use being found as the barn does not suit modern agricultural needs. The timber framing is in need of urgent repair and the movement of the frame will need to be corrected. The level of survey undertaken by the present study is considered sufficient unless there are proposals to convert the building to residential use, in which case further recording may be considered appropriate.

Lower Lea Cowhouse 1

- 6.9 The 19th-century cowhouse is generally in good condition, with only minor repairs required to the roof. The present form of the building would allow it to continue in use as an agricultural building and this would be the preferred option to ensure its survival.

Lower Lea Cartshed and Granary

- 6.10 As has already been mentioned, the condition of the earlier cartshed is a cause for considerable concern. The western gable wall has seen recent collapse and the whole structure is now under threat if remedial works are not undertaken immediately. Stabilisation of the wall is of vital importance to the management not only of the cartshed, but also of the tower keep.
- 6.11 The remainder of the range is in good condition and the first floor is still in use as a grain store. The long-term future, however, may depend on an alternative use being found.

Lower Lea Cowhouse 2

- 6.12 The single-storey, 19th-century cowhouse is a good example of its type, which has remained relatively unaltered. It is not, however, subject to any statutory protection. The building has been disused for some time and is not suited to modern agricultural needs. The western end lies beneath a modern steel-framed cover barn which was never completed, the intention having been to replace the whole structure. It is to be presumed that the cover barn will eventually be completed and the cowhouse is likely to be demolished. The present study has conducted a survey of the building which is considered to include sufficient detail for provision of an appropriate record and no further recording is proposed.

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Maps

1752 John Rocque's map of Shropshire. Published lithograph

The minor road from Bishops Castle to Totterton is shown as passing through Lea as it was then called, with houses to either side of it, rather than to the south. Oakeley Park lay to the south-west and Lydham Heath to the west.

1779 Plan of two farms situate at the Lea. SRRO/Clarke and Co 1141/Bundle 108/109.3

Farms belonging to Edmund Plowden Esq and Mr Hodson. Plan by Edward Powell. The buildings shown are similar to the Tithe equating with Upper Lea and what is now Lea Cottage. As these are the only building shown it suggests that in the late 18th century there were three farms here. One field at SO 353896 is depicted, divided into twelve strip fields with aratral curving in their shape. These farms were severally owned but surrounded by lands owned by William Oakeley. By the time of the tithe that family had acquired the rest of the Lea.

1791 Hucklement Common SRRO/791/7

Working map showing division of common into blocks and the coach road cutting across it. No settlements shown.

1793 Settlement of boundary between Bishop's Castle and Lydbury North SRRO/1079/Box 13.2.

Sketch drawing designed to define the boundary and signed by local landowners including William Oakeley. Land lies to the north of the road from Bishops Castle to Ludlow. In area of what is now known as Oakeley Mynd. Lea does not figure on this map.

c.1800 Map of the manor of Bishop's Castle. SRRO/552/8/936.

Small scale map showing Lea as a group of buildings with the old road leading directly to it, with the main T-junction in the centre of the settlement

c.1818 Plan of new turnpike from Bishops Castle past Totterton towards Plowden. SRRO 552/8/780.

Illustrates the by-passing of Lea around 1820

1820 Plan of new turnpike from Bishop's Castle eastwards. SRRO/552/8/804.

Shows in detail the new road by-passing Lea. The modern footpath marked on modern Ordnance Survey maps to the south of the 1820 road was the original course.

1833 Plan of a farm at the Lea. SRRO/3459/86.

Parish of Bishops Castle, proprietor William Oakeley. Note that farm itself was not called the Lea. This farm was the equivalent of Upper Lea, the holding lying to the east and south of the farm buildings in an irregular grouping. Shows the big pool in the field 16 confirming that larger than today; field immediately to the east was then called Pool Piece

1844 Tithe Map for Bishops Castle, township of Lea and Oakley.

1883 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map, Shropshire 63.1 and 63.5